

N^o 16
A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the
Anniversary Meeting,
FOR THE
BENEFIT *of the* CHILDREN
Belonging to the
Charity-School in Stamford,
IN THE
Parish-Church of ALL-SAINTS,
On Thursday, September 17, 1724.

By WILLIAM HANNES, M. A. K
Master of the FREE-SCHOOL in *Stamford, Lincolnshire,*
and Rector of *Newton Purcel* in *Oxfordshire.*

Publiſh'd at the Request of the Trustees and Subscribers to the ſaid
Charity.

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TO THE
Trustees and Subscribers
TO THE
CHARITY-SCHOOL
IN
STAMFORD.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Number and Value of
your Yearly Subscriptions, be-
sides your liberal Contribu-
tions upon this Day's Occasion, are
ample Testimonies, in the Sight of
God and good Men, how well you
are inclin'd to the Subject of this
Discourse: To which Inclination,
may be owing that Attention you
gave

The Dedication.

gave it in the Delivery, and your further favouring it with a Desire that it might be Printed: Which, how much so ever averse to, I cou'd not refuse, because requested by Persons actuated by the same Publick-Spirit this Discourse recommends, and to whom my Successors too in this Place will be greatly oblig'd, for those Benefactions which I take this Opportunity of acknowledging. I am,

Gentlemen,

Your most Humble Servant,

William Hanne

A Charity Sermon.

I

PSALM Lxxi. the 5th and Part of the 6th Verse.

Thou art my Hope, O Lord God ; Thou art my Trust, from my Youth.

By Thee have I been holden up from the Womb :---my Praise shall be continually of Thee.

THESE Words may suggest to the Hearer, a grateful Acknowledgement, from the Prophet *David*, of all the Mercies, God had vouchsafed him, from the Time of his Birth, to that of his writing this *Psalms*: And as Strength is ever magnified by Weakness, and That is the most proper Time, for infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness to interpose itself, when Dangers come thickest, and Wants, and Distresses are most clamorous, and importunate ; the Royal Prophet, here particularly, recollects the Times of his Infancy, Childhood, and Youth, as more eminent Periods of his own Self-Insufficiency, and Dependence upon something above him. Many of these Mercies were conferr'd upon him, previous to any Service, or even Petition of his own ; e're yet he cou'd express his Wants, or be sensible of any Being to whom he cou'd apply himself for relief ; which therefore from the free unprovok'd Manner in which they were given, call'd for his earliest Returns of Acknowledgment, so soon as he shou'd be capable of understanding from what Hand these Helps came, and of forming his Thoughts into Praise, and Thanksgiving : The Exercise of which, towards his Great Creator and Preserver, was to last as long as he carried about him that Being, which owed its Formation, Continuance, and every Thing belonging to it, to God's Power, and Goodness.

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Thou art my Hope, O Lord God: Thou art my Trust from my Youth. By Thee have I been holden up, from the Womb: my Praise shall be continually of Thee.

But to magnify God with a Song, and to praise him with Thanksgiving, tho' it may better please, than a Sacrifice of the largest Size, or Price; yet it is not All, that is implied in the Text; which requires also, a dutiful Submission to the whole Will of God, and an Endeavour to transcribe into ourselves such of his Perfections, as are imitable by us: But it more particularly directs us, to render ourselves fit Instruments of his Providence towards others, in those very Circumstances, under which we our selves have labour'd, been reliev'd in, or deliver'd from. This is all along inferr'd and inculcated throughout the Old Testament, and the Gospel, and the Epistles in the New. Let one Instance from each suffice; Deut. x. 19. *Love ye therefore the Stranger, for ye were Strangers in the Land of Egypt.* Mat. xviii. 33. *Shouldest not Thou have had Compassion on thy Fellow-Servant, even as I had Pity on Thee?* And Ephes. iv. 32. *Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's Sake, hath forgiven you.* So that to him who receives a Benefit, in the same Sense that the Almighty gives it, every Blessing carries with it an Exhortation, and a Duty springs up from every Favour: One Mercy thankfully and duly receiv'd, creates an Aptitude, and excites an Inclination to produce more, and the Condition is better'd, that the Man may be so too: Each beneficent Act of the Almighty, practicable by us, is to put us in Mind of our Fellow-Creatures, as well as of our Creator, and silently imparts this Admonition, to every considerate Receiver, of *Go and do thou likewise.*

This then being premised, I shall treat of the following Particulars.

I. The General Obligation from Humane Nature, and Christianity, to succour and relieve Necessity, and Affliction: Of which, that there are so many miserable Instances in the World, God's Justice is by no means to be call'd in Question.

II. I shall mention some particular Incitements to this Duty, from the Amiability, Honour, and Dignity, as well as Usefulness, that many Times attend Misery and Indigence.

And, as Beginnings are especially to be taken Care of, where-ever we wish the End shou'd succeed well; and little Things too are not without their proper Use and Excellencies, that under this View,

III. and lastly, The Wants and Necessities of Infancy, and Childhood, are by no means the least to be regarded.

First then I am to shew the general Obligation from Humane Nature and Christianity to, &c. *The Earth is the Lord's and the Fulness thereof*; and, unless when He, in his Anger, thinks fit to order otherwise, what it produces, is sufficient for the Maintenance of all the Creatures that are upon it. For the Divine Being is not, what some with more Prophaneness than Wit, have represented Him, like a Great Man, whose Vanity prompts him to retain more Dependants, than his Revenue can support: And, that both the Earth, and the Ark, were neither of 'em sufficient for the Purposes, for which God created the one, and directed the making of the other, are each of 'em Objections that have been made in their Turns *. But can they believe, or do they consider God, as a Being of infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, at the same Time, that they make so idle, and ridiculous a Representation of Him,

* See Bishop Wilkins's *Real Character*, and Dr. Delaune's *Sermon to the Sons of the Clergy*.

as not to be able to foresee, or not able, and willing to provide, what will be sufficient for his Creatures? Is any Thing more or less hard to Omnipotence? Whatever He has done in relation to Man, is positively Good, and a real Effect of his Infinite Love: And as for the Wants, and Distresses so visible in the World, occasion'd by some Mens Luxury, Avarice, or Ambition, &c. detaining That from others, which their Necessities entitle them to, They can by no means be charged upon Him, but upon the Persons He only permits so to do, by the Consequence of that State and Order of Things, in which the World was left by the Transgression of our first Parents. Dismal indeed are the Effects of their Fall! and they were undoubtedly guilty of the most positive Injustice, in plunging their Posterity into such dreadful Circumstances; yet the Righteousness of God is not to be call'd in Question, for the bare Permission of that Punishment, which as long as the Creature continues evil, He is not in justice oblig'd to remove. Nor was it unjust in God, to appoint such an Order of Things, in which one Man's Misery, might be the unavoidable Consequence of another's Wickedness; any more than He is to blame, for that Bodies Gravitate; Winter has it's Ice and Cold; Spring and Autumn their Diseases; that Winds, and Storms have Force; that the Sea rages, and Rivers overflow, wild Beasts devour, or Men, more savage, have Enmity with one another, because there are Persons who have suffer'd in their Circumstances, or lost their Lives, from these Qualities adhering to the Things just now mention'd: But St. James tells us, that *the Day of the Lord is at hand*, in which all false Judgments shall be answer'd, and Wrongs set right. When the injur'd shall be infinitely more than made amends, for whatever, Selfishness, Luxury, Avarice, Fraud, Pride, Envy, or Malice have with-held, or taken away from them; and the Injurers shall for ever *Weep and Howle for the Miseries that shall*

come

come upon them. And therefore in the mean time, if these bold Objectors against God and his Providence, were more generously employ'd in reasoning themselves, and persuading others *to a Readiness to distribute, and a Willingness to communicate* upon the firm Belief and Principle that it is the *laying up for themselves a good Foundation for the time to come*; they wou'd then find their own Objection lessen daily upon their Hands, and feel within them a rational, and much more lasting Satisfaction, in glad'ning the Hearts, and reviving the Spirits of Multitudes of such as are sunk deep into Misery and Despondency; by a prudent Distribution of such Sums, which, after every Article of living answerably to their Birth, Quality, and Condition is punctually and honourably defrayed, might be very easily retrench'd from the great Expences, that must attend a continual Hurry of Company, of fashionable Amusements, and Diversions; to all which, they may, perhaps, be more prompted from the Fear of serious Thinking, shou'd they be left to themselves, than from any violent Inclinations they have for, or from any real Delight or Pleasure that can attend These, or indeed any sort of Entertainments when so often repeated.

St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy, orders him, and in him all others of the same sacred Function, to *charge them who are Rich in this World, not to trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God*: And what Subject can better deserve all the Recommendation, and Force that can be given it, from our Thoughts, our Lips, and our Lives. Great indeed are the Effects of Wealth; it procures to it's Possessors much Power, great Titles, stately Buildings, rich Furniture, large Demeans, Multitude of Attendants, much Obedience and Respect; and all the Elegance, Magnificence, and Splendor, that Nature, or Art, can supply, or devise: And yet after all these boasted

ed Powers of Riches, besides the Thought of the Uncertainty of their staying with their present Possessors, or of theirs with them, yet supposing them and all other outward visible Circumstances to continue as they were; yet if it please God to let loose any Uneasiness upon their Minds, from the Imagination, or from any other Faculty as He best knows how, and from whence; If He mix in their full Cup any the least Drop out of one of the *Vials of his Wrath*; immediately Satisfaction sickens, Delight languishes, and Desire fails; Their *Glory is put out*, and Their *Crown falls to the Ground*, as the Royal Psalmist expresses it: Who in another Place gives us a lively Instance of this sudden Change, from his own Experience, and in his own Person, *Psal. xxx. 6, 7. In my Prosperity, I said, I shall never be moved; Thou Lord of thy Goodness, hast made my Mountain to stand so strong: The very next Words are, Thou didst turn thy Face away, and I was troubled. And Job xxxiv. 29, When He giveth Quietness, who then can make Trouble? and when He hideth his Face, who then can behold Him? whether it be done against a Nation, or a Man only.*

Whereas the Man, who, instead of saying to the Gold *thou art my Hope, and to the fine Gold thou art my Confidence*, looks upon God as his Strength; is prepar'd for any Condition of Life that Heaven shall allot him: If a plentiful one, he makes a generous and charitable Use of it; If Affliction is to be his Portion, he is arm'd beforehand with Patience and Resignation, that if Troubles abound, Consolation may still much more abound. Nay, tho' the Prince of the Powers of the Air be permitted to vex him with all his Storms, and cause his loudest Terrours to gather and roll on, till they burst over his Head, and the thick black Clouds of Envy, and Malignity, flash out their Fury, and dart all their Vengeance at him; he is then more eminently

ly sensible of an All-powerful Being, united to his own, ever present to him, and whispering Safety, Comfort, and Encouragement in well-doing, amidst the greatest seeming Severity of outward Distress. Or, if through Publick Calamity, or Scarcity, or the Infliction of Domestick Injuries, or Misfortunes, he is put to the utmost Streights of Necessity, though *the Fig-Tree shall not blossom at all, or if it does, not to him, neither shall Fruit be in the Vines, the Labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yeild no Meat, the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stalls, yet will he rejoyce in the Lord, he will joy in the God of his Salvation,* Hab. iii. 17, 18.

But shou'd Those, to whom the Apostle gives this Commission, of *charging such, who are rich in this World, not to trust in uncertain Riches, &c.* hold their Peace; yet will all Nature cry aloud to the same good Purpose, throughout all her Works, and every Day is spent by them, from their own abundant Kindness to him, in arguing Man, but without Noise and Strife, into Bounty and Beneficence: For whose Sake the Rivers flow; Plants and Trees grow up and flourish, the Cattle feed, and the Earth, Sea, and Air, are fill'd with Living Creatures, of so many different Kinds, fit for his Food or Use: For whose Sake too, the Sun rises and sets; and then the Moon and the Stars are lighted up; Day and Night succeed each other; *the Clouds drop Fatness,* the Seasons observe their Returns, and this of Autumn especially, by a plentiful Effusion of all her Fruits, loudly crys out to the Gatherers *freely ye have received freely give.* But Man is more particularly admonished to a liberal Use of them, by the very Nature and Texture of those very Things themselves, which God of His Providence, form'd, and design'd, for proper Instruments of our administering to one another's Necessity or Convenience, in that they will, by a sordid Difuse and

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Concealment loose of their Weight and Brightness, and eat into themselves and their Owners, as St. James observes, *Your Gold and your Silver is canker'd, and the Rust of them shall be a Witness against you, and shall eat your Flesh as it were Fire.* Ye have heap'd Treasure together for the last Days: And whilst there are so many who are pinch'd with Cold and Hunger for want of them, Garments will be Moth-eaten, and Provisions will corrupt; Houses too, if not inhabited, will the sooner go to Decay, and that most precious Talent of our Time, of which the Almighty Giver, to teach us to husband it the better, entrusts us with but one Moment, or Drop of it at once, generally is trifled away, without any Satisfaction, but with Imputation to the Mispender; runs out into Sottishness and Debauchery, in one Sex, or Tattling and Defamation in the other, and Envy and Maliciousness in both, if, (after our own Affairs, which ought not to take up a great deal of it, are satisfied) it is not generously and honourably employed, for the Service of our Friends our Neighbours, our Country, or the Good of Mankind in general: For nothing can exempt any Man living from a Claim, or Title, to our Good Will and Beneficence; not even the greatest Ill-Will or Injury from him to ourselves, or, indeed any Offence of his against God. The Almighty's *making the Sun to rise, and his Rain to fall upon the Just, and the Unjust,* would be a strong Intimation to us, how we ought to behave to His, and our own Enemies, and that they stand entitled to the bountiful Effects, and Fruits, of that Rain and Sunshine, if St. Paul had not further explain'd that Passage by saying, *If thine Enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst, give him Drink,* and instructed us, from that beautiful Allusion to hard Metals* (by the way, not always the least valu-

* Rom. xii. 20.

able) which may be *melted down*, when it is impossible to break them into Usefulness, and Compliance, that an inveterate Frowardness, and Obstinacy of Temper, is likely to be wrought upon, by the subtile Insinuations of Kindness, and good Usage, when it never will, *by rend'ring Evil for Evil, or Railing for Railing.*

I come now to the Second Thing propos'd, *viz.*

II. Some particular Incitements to this Duty, from the Amiability, Honour, and Dignity, as well as Usefulness, that many Times attend Misery and Indigence.

From that earnest Desire which every Man finds within himself, for Perfection and Duration, there is something very affecting in Deficiency and Discontinuance, where-ever one meets with it; and the Sight of Detriment and Destruction in Things that are, or have been any way useful or excellent, raises in us a sensible Indignation and Concern. The Wounds and Defacing of a Picture or Statue, are sometimes felt more by the curious Observer, than by the Proprietor, and a fine Building that has suffer'd by Time or Force, shall raise an Uneasiness in the Man of Taste, tho' but a Passenger, to that Degree, that he shall be more disturb'd and concern'd at what is lost, than pleas'd with the far greater Part that remains. And can we pay so much Respect to a little Oyl and Colours upon Canvas; a Peice of Marble, or a Heap of Wood and Stones, which though never so curiously wrought, or elegantly dispos'd according to the nicest Rules of Proportion and Art, and finish'd with all the proper Ornaments, are still only *the Work of Mens Hands*, and be unconcern'd at any Want, Affliction, or Distress that shall come upon Man himself, one of our own Species, and the last and most valuable Peice of the Six Days Creation, form'd at first in *the Image of God*, into which *He breathed the Breath of Life*, and gave him Dominion over the rest of his Creatures,

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tures, in whose Flesh, and perfect Nature, the Son of God once vouchsafed Himself to be in-tabernacl'd, and cloth'd upon, and was crucified in it to redeem it, with which *He ascended into Heaven, and now sitteth at the Right Hand of God, Angels, and Principalities, and Powers being made Subject to Him?* How finely does the Almighty apply Himself to this Passion in us for Things inanimate, and of inferiour Value, in order to work up in our Souls a just Esteem of, and suitable Compassion for the Destruction and the Miseries of those of our own Species, in treating with the Prophet *Jonas* about the saving of *Nineveh*, after Judgment had gone out against it, in his Argument taken from the Gourd; which was *the Son of a Night*, as it is in the *Hebrew*, and *perished in a Night!* And God said unto *Jonah*, *Dost thou well to be angry for the Gourd?* And he said *I do well to be angry even unto Death.* Then said the Lord, *thou hast had Pity on the Gourd, for the which thou hast not labour'd, neither madest it grow, and should not I spare Nineveh, that great City, wherein there are more than Sixty Thousand Persons, that cannot discern between their Right Hand and their Left?* See what Regard is paid to their Innocence, though attended with so much Ignorance; whilst the Pride that arose from the Opinion they had of their Learning, was deem'd one Part of the Occasion of those heavy Judgments denounced against *Assyria*, as may be seen from the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Thy Wisdom and thy Knowledge it hath perverted thee, and thou hast said in thine Heart, I am, and none besides me.*

But there are some Agreeable, as well Useful Scenes of Affliction, from Qualities which are in themselves recommending, being made more so by such Circumstances. Youth, Beauty, Innocence, and Modesty, Science, or Skill become more amiable and attractive from virtuous Distress, and inward Bitterness of Soul will find a Way to discover

A Charity Sermon.

II

discover itself, by the Colour, Look, Features, or Behaviour, in such a manner, as is beyond the Art of Painting or Sculpture to represent, or the Power of Language, with all its Helps from Oratory or Poetry, to express:

— — — *Grande doloris*
Ingenium, miserisq; venit solertia rebus.

Even before that it is possible for Time and Patience, and a Reliance upon inward Comforts to have wrought up the Mind to such a State of Firmness and Serenity as to endear Afflictions, and to *smile at Grief*, if not *rejoyce in Tribulation*; Christian Distress has, with others, this Quality in common with Christian Charity, that *it doth not behave itself unseemly*, but with Meekness, and Silence: Whilst the more violent Expressions of it are best known only to God and the Sufferer, a Sigh now and then rising from the very bottom of the Heart, and a few Drops hanging carelessly upon the Cheeks, are more affectingly becoming, than all the Gaiety and Extravagance of Dress; tho' *to Gold, and Pearls, and costly Array*, you add the most precious glittering Ornaments that Eastern Mines can furnish. *Cast thy Bread upon the Waters*, says Solomon, that is, the Tears of the Indigent and Afflicted; *and thou shalt find it after many Days*. For tho' Man may be, and too often is, ungrateful, yet *God is not unrighteous, to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which ye have shew'd towards his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Wants and Necessities of your Brethren, and do minister.*

As to delight in, or to insult Distress, besides the horrid Wickedness of it, is ever a Sign of a Meanness and Wretchedness of Temper, and is no where more visible than amongst the Dregs of the People, and such who have not had, or have made no Advantage of the Opportunities

tunities of a good Education; so to great and noble Minds, there is something sacred in Misery: Especially, when it proceeds from an Eminence in any useful Art, Quality, Profession, or Science. A Person who is excellent in any Kind, is almost sure to know Sorrow; for besides the Pains and Wearisomness to the Flesh, that are necessary to the acquiring any Degree of Superiority, in any Thing that is useful or elegant, instructive or entertaining; such a one stands in the Way of the Reputation or Gain, of all that are below him, and lives a daily and hourly Contradiction and Reflection, a silent Upbraiding and a Scourge, upon their meaner Qualifications, or lesser Attainments, their Indolence, or their Luxury. And upon these Occasions, it is sometimes not unpleasant to observe Sloth to begin to awake, and stir, and for a while become *really* active; Stupidity set up for Sprightliness and Ingenuity, and Wretches long since abandon'd and lost to all manner of Virtue and Decency, put on an Air of Sanctity and Solemnity, and pretend Offence at Men of ten thousand times more value than themselves; and to see Envy and Malice prompt them to that Labour, Study, Self-denial, and Contradiction to their Habits, for a Time, to which Virtue, with all her Charms, cou'd never engage them, nor Religion, with her Hopes and Fears of Rewards and Punishments, exquisite and endless, either persuade or drive them. And thus it was in St. Paul's Time, as we read, *Phil. i. 15. Some indeed preach Christ out of Envy and Malice, and some out of Good-will; the one preach Christ of Contention, not sincerely, supposing to add Affliction to my Bonds. And tho' truly Wise, and Good Men are glad to meet with and patronize Merit where-ever they find it, yet since the good ones are so vastly out-number'd by the Sons of Violence, Iniquity, and Folly; and even these Sons of Folly, and the Children of this World, are in their Generation*

tion wiser than the Children of Light; and whilst this Earth is design'd only for the School of Virtue, and not the Place where it is to be finally fix'd and rewarded, it shou'd cease our Astonishment to see under the Sun, that the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor Riches to Men of Understanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill, but Time and Chance happeneth to them all.

But that which most ennobles and consecrates Sufferings, is the Behaviour of those great and glorious Patterns of Truth, *those earnest Contenders for the Faith, which was once deliver'd to the Saints, the Confessors and Martyrs: Who chose to forego not only the Luxury and Pleasure, but the Ease and Comforts of this World, and every Thing convenient and necessary to the Body, and to part with even Life it self, when the preserving it interfer'd with the End of Living, the Testimony of a good Conscience.* What a noble Appearance do these passive Heroes make, in History and Antiquity, and such as the greatest Bigots to earthly Honours and Atcheivement cannot boast of, nor the Retainers to 'Scutcheonry and Blazoning, from amongst all their Pomp and Farce of Ensignry and Device, and the various Marks of Family Distinction, produce or parallel? Nor can any of their Shields or Crests upbraid degenerate Posterity, with such Prowess, Exploits, or Victories, as these have gain'd over their several Enemies the Devil, the World, and Themselves. And what a goodly Figure do these make, and how far superior to any Grecian or Roman Triumph or Procession, when *having their Loyns girt about with Truth, and having on the Breast-plate of Righteousness, and for an Helmet the Hope of Salvation; each Man bearing the Instrument by which he suffer'd, their Saws, and their Axes, their Flaying-Knives, and their Fagots, they press forward*
towards

towards the Prize of the high Calling that is before them; in Faith and Patience, Humility and Meekness, Mortification and Self-denial, Charity and constant Perseverance unto the End, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of their Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God? And how does that noble Harbinger and Herald, the Prophet *Isaiab* introduce, and describe this Captain of their Salvation, in his coming with Mercy towards his Church, and Victory over his Enemies, in a manner, as far surpassing what we call Regal or Imperial, as the Style and Subjects of Scripture exceed those of any common Composition; Chap. lxiii. 1, &c. *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed Garments from Bosrah?* This that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the Greatness of his Strength? I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save. And Ver. 8, 9. *For he said, surely they are my People, Children that will not Lye, so he was their Saviour. In all their Affliction, he was afflicted; and the Angel of his Presence saved them: In his Love, and in his Pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the Days of Old.*

But such glorious Ends as these, had, no doubt, answerable Beginnings; which brings me to the Third and Last Thing I propos'd to speak to, That

III. The Wants, and Necessities of Infancy, and Childhood, are, by no means, the least to be regarded.

When the Holy Ghost wou'd particularly express God's Design to exert any beneficial Attribute, or earnestly recommend any Duty to Man, he makes use of the Terms of Family Relation; by the Prophet *David*, *As a Father pitieth his own Children, so is the Lord merciful to them that fear him.* By *St. Paul*, *Love as Brethren*, and our Blessed Saviour saith, *He that doth the Will of my Father which*

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is in Heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother : And when his Disciples were disputing about Superiority, (to which each of them thought himself entitled by his Services) in his Kingdom, now approaching, which they foolishly thought, was to be an earthly one, he does not send them to the Courts or Camps, nor to the Schools of Learning and Philosophy, then in their greatest Glory, but to the Cradle and Swadling-cloaths, to Infants and Striplings for Advice ; saying, *Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little Child, he shall not enter therein.* And kind indeed it was in him, instead of punishing their Pride by some heavy Judgment, thus lovingly to admonish them, and us, how to arrive at all the Benefit of Sufferings, without feeling the Severity and Smart of them. Nor are these Thorns and Briars the Product of Chance or Neglect, as those were, with which *Gideon taught the Men of Succoth ; for Affliction cometh not forth out of the Dust, neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground ;* but they are sent with a Design to make us search and try our Ways, and to call us off, from our too eager Delight in, and Pursuit of Earthly Things ; to look into our selves, and there to examine the State and Condition of our Minds, in respect to God, and a future State ; to purge and clear them from what is pernicious and damnable, and to retain and improve in them what is virtuous and salutary ; to sepearate from the Subtilty, the Wisdom of the Serpent, and to joyn to it, and correct it with, the Innocence of the Dove. To add to the manly Improvements of a rational Faith, Knowledge, Prudence, Fortitude, Long-suffering, Self-denial, and the like, those milder Endowments of Innocence, Meekness, Lowliness, Obedience, and a teachable Temper of Mind ; all which are so earnestly recommended, by our Saviour, in these little, but eminent Patterns of 'em, *Children.* To whom,

whom, and to their Virtues, and to the Improvements of them, Christ shew'd the greatest Regard, for *He took them up in his Arms, put his Hands upon them, and blessed them.* And to let his Disciples, who *wou'd have kept them from Him*, see what a Detestation and Abhorrence, He had, and they ought to have for that Pride and Haughtiness of Spirit, from which humane Nature has suffer'd more, than from any one, or perhaps any Number of Vices besides: For as other Vices arise out of our bad Actions, this springs up from our good ones; and the better we are, still are we the more in Danger from it: 'Tis bred and nourish'd by others Vices, as well as by our own Virtues, and we are apt to form our Opinion of our selves, as the Pharisee did his Thanksgiving, not only from what we are, but from what we are not: And the Danger is still the more, for that so many Arts and Sciences that were wont to be employed in the Service of God, are now prostituted to the Service of this Vice; so that any Precept or Pattern, whereby we may learn to divest our selves of it, ought to be receiv'd and acknowledged by us, with the highest Honour and Esteem, as doth the Prophet David, *Lord, I am not high-minded, I have no proud Looks: I do not exercise my self in great Matters, which are too high for me, but I refrain my Soul, and keep it low, like as a Child that is weaned from his Mother; my Soul is even as a weaned Child.* But,

2dly, From the Sense that Children shew that they partake of the Joy or Grief of those with whom they live, the Man who industriously, premeditatedly, and deliberately gives Birth and Vent to secret Calumny, *the Pestilence that walketh in Darknes*, (the greatest Instance possible both of Cowardice and Malice) or he that more generously, but still barbarously, woundeth *with the Arrow that flieth at Noon-day*, may each of 'em learn, that it is a

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Temper of Mind much more agreeable to Humane Nature, *to mourn with them that mourn, and rejoyce with them that rejoyce*, than to repine at the good Qualities, and Excellencies of Others; or entertain a sullen Satisfaction at their Miseries. And thus *out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings, bath God ordained Strength, to still the Enemy and the Avenger*; and to convince them, if they will but attend to it, that a Malignancy of Spirit, that torments and harrows up the Soul it is shut up in, and when let loose, sets at Variance and inflames Families, Friendships, Neighbourhoods, Societies, Towns, Cities, and Kingdoms, is contradictory to common Humanity, and the most uninstructed Reason, as well as to that Command of the Apostle, *In Malice be ye Children, but in Understanding be Men.*

3dly, Here too, the Man who unmindful of his Sepulchre, lanches forwards in his Designs a great Way into Futurity, and thinks of little else, than of *adding House to House, and Field to Field*, and of joyn-ing Estates, and, perhaps, Kingdoms together, and lays Schemes for many Ages to come, when he is not sure of living a Year, a Month, nay, a Day to an End; such a one might learn more in Half an Hour's Converse, from one of these little, untaught, Philosophers whose *Angels*, our Saviour tells us, *alway behold the Face of his Father which is in Heaven*, than in the Company of Sages, Senators, and Statesmen. Skill in Language, 'tis true, is not yet their Talent, for even their Articulation is hardly intelligible; but their Artless Looks, and Motions wou'd teach him, and he might read this useful Admonition in the Ease and Chearfulness of their Countenances, when the few Demands necessary to their Contentment are satisfied, joyfully, and thankfully to
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lay hold of the Blessings, Providence, and the present Hour reach out to him, and to leave *To-morrow*, and *Futurity to take Care of the Things* of themselves.

These little Instructors then, which merit so much by their Innocence, and by That, and their other good Qualities, *sow unto us their spiritual Things*, ought certainly to be provided for, those of them that cannot be supplied by their own Relations, out of *our worldly Things*. Invention cannot form a greater Unhappiness in Domestick Life, than for a Parent to be affected to that Degree of Tenderness towards his Child, as to say with *Jacob*, *My Life is bound up in the Lad's*, and yet, which is too often the Case, unable to supply him with the Necessaries of this Life, or proper Instructions towards the Preparation for a better. A seasonable Relief in these Circumstances, must be acceptable to a Degree, equal to the Love of a Parent for his Children; which what it is, we often see by a Father's hazarding his Health, Life, and too often his Soul, for the Benefit of his Children: So that for a Man in Necessity, to meet with an Opportunity of having his Child fed, cloth'd, and instructed, and early made acquainted with the Paths of Industry and Vertue, to qualify him for some useful Trade or Calling, by a better Education, perhaps, than he cou'd have had, if the Father had been to choose for him, How must it refresh the Bowels of such Parents, *to whom this their Son was dead, but is alive again, was lost, and is found*. And how advantageous must it be for a Nation, to have those Hands honestly employ'd in some useful Manufacture or Business, which otherwise wou'd be purloining or plundering the Property of others, and the Fruits of their Labours; and by these Means live a Burden to themselves, and their Country,

Country, or die an infamous Sacrifice to such Crimes as Passions unrestrain'd from the Beginning, strengthen'd by a long Habit of Licentiousness may prompt, or extreme Poverty drive them to.

And as the Effect, of other Charities as to this World; generally ceases with the Objects, the Nature of this is such, that it must encrease by Time, and contribute to its own Maintenance, and in a manner, *work out*, for it self, *its own Salvation*, and Immortality. For besides that all well-dispos'd Persons will always chearfully contribute to so reasonable, so prudent, so beneficial a Project, 'tis impossible but that Those who shall be rais'd by it out of the Jaws of Necessity, if they are not lost to all Consideration, and Sense of Gratitude, must *look back to this Rock from whence they were hewn*, and to the *Hole of the Pit from whence they were digged*; and never fail to lend their utmost Strength and Assistance to other future Indigents, labouring under the same Extremities; from which they themselves were once so seasonably, so providentially deliver'd. Their Children too, and their Childrens Children, and they that shall be born from Them, may owe the Conveniences and Comforts; and some of 'em perhaps the State and Grandeur of Life; and so likewise Those that shall be a-kin to any of these by Affinity, may owe the Happiness of that Relation, to the Piety and Charity of these Anniversary Solemnities: And this long after the Heads of those who first contriv'd, and put them into a good Method, shall be laid in the Grave: And Ages after the Mind that prompted, and the Hand that reach'd out the Benefaction, shall be so far separated, the one *return'd to God who gave it*, the other become an undistinguishable Part of the Dust from whence it was taken, their good Works will

will be still alive, moving, and acting, and bringing forth Fruits which shall follow them, as they themselves shall see at the great Day of Retribution. When Christ, in the Name of Multitudes of such as They never saw, or heard, or thought of, shall say, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat, thirsty, and ye gave me Drink, naked, and ye cloth'd me, &c.*

And if God will so surprizingly reward these little Services, done to that gross and perishable Part of us; What will He do, or rather what will He not do for the good Offices done for that immaterial Part of us which never can dye?

But as the best Desires and Designs without God are nothing, we must by no means omit applying to Him for his most gracious Favour and Assistance, towards their Furtherance and Completion; *that in This, and all our Works begun, continued, and ended in Him, we may glorifie his holy Name, and finally, by his Mercy, obtain everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

O Lord, who hast taught us, that all our Doings without Charity are nothing worth; send thy holy Ghost, and pour into our Hearts that most excellent Gift of Charity, the very Bond of Peace and of all Vertues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee. Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's Sake. Amen.



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